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DEPARTMENT FOR SRAP, SCA/FO, SCA/A, EUR/RPM, INR/B
STATE PASS USAID FOR ASIA/SCAA
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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [PK](#) [AF](#)
SUBJECT: REGIONAL COMMAND EAST: NANGARHAR PROVINCE TRIBAL
ELDERS UNITE AGAINST TALIBAN

Classified By: Interagency Provincial Affairs Deputy Director Hoyt Yee
for Reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

11. (S/REL USA/NATO) On January 21 approximately 170 Shinwari tribal elders convened to endorse a robust anti-Taliban and anti-corruption collective defense agreement in Nangarhar Province, a key focus of the Regional Command-East (RC(E)). These tribal areas span critical terrain in southeastern Nangarhar along the volatile and largely ungoverned border with Pakistan where Taliban influence is pervasive and often violent. The opportunity for Shinwari-initiated reintegration of the Taliban in coordination with GIROA is central to the agreement. RC(E) views this cautiously as a potential, perhaps enduring step in breaking the Taliban,s grip on these tribes and intend to pursue it as an established priority under our joint campaign plan. RC(E) also believes it prudent to facilitate cross-border dialogue between the Shinwari and Pakistan,s Afridi tribe to provide depth to Shinwari defenses and expand the appeal for Taliban reintegration. End Summary and comment.

TAKING A STAND AGAINST THE TALIBAN

12. (S/REL USA/NATO) The Shinwari are one of three dominant tribes in Nangarhar Province, a key focus of RC(E) joint campaign plan, in part because their tribal areas span critical terrain in southeastern Nangarhar along the volatile and largely ungoverned border with Pakistan. The rift which ultimately led to this week,s defense agreement was the July 17 killing of a Taliban sub-commander and capture of several subordinates by the militia of influential Mamand Valley (Achin District) elder Malik Niyaz. Facing Taliban retribution, Malik Niyaz quickly formed a collective defense pact with his sometimes rival for influence Malik Usman, and also sought Coalition assistance. Two monhs later elders from several other sub-tribes joined the pact in a meeting brokered by the Coalition, and the nascent tribal pact gradually gained traction in fits and starts. Over the past six months, Task Force Mountain Warrior engaged Shinwari tribal elders to determine how best to support this singular initiative in a region where resistance to the Taliban is generally problematic. The elders have sought general development assistance, better communication and coordination, and general support in fighting corruption. The Task Force has discussed with them hiring locally for Afghan Border Police. Toward these ends, the Task Force is looking to make available immediately USD 200,000 for cash-for-work and a USD one million one-time tribal budget, the disposition of such funds to be publicized and transparently allocated by the tribal shura. Discussions continue on the standing up of an Afghan Border Police battalion with local hires.

13. (C/REL USA/NATO) On January 21 Shinwari elders convened at the Afghan Border Police (ABP) Sixth Kandak (battalion)

Headquarters to endorse an anti-Taliban and anti-corruption intra-tribal collective defense agreement. All major Shinwari power brokers were present or represented, including (please protect all identities): Malik Suhail Khan (Shinwar/Sange Khel, Nazyan District), Haji Haq Mohammad (on behalf of Malik Gul Nazar, Achin District), Malik Sartar (Shinwar/Hasan Khel, Deh Bala District), Malik Kaftar Khan (Shinwar/Shaik, Dur Baba District), Malik Mahmood (Shinwar/Sengai, Achin District), and influential Mamand Valley elders Malik Usman (Shinwar/Heider Khel, Shadel Bazaar and Spin Ghar, Achin District) and Malik Niyaz (Shinwar/Rahmindad Khel, Spin Ghar, Achin District). The tribal leadership agreed to collective defense provisions and fines for harboring insurgents, offering opportunity for Shinwari-initiated reintegration in coordination with GIROA. Malik Mahmood (protect) read the document aloud, and other prominent maliks (community leaders) made public statements on local radio.

WHAT THE SHINWARI NEED TO HELP RESIST THE TALIBAN IN NANGARHAR

¶4. (C/REL USA/NATO) During the course of the January 21st shura, Malik Niyaz (protect) proclaimed to shouts of support that the Shinwari tribe is united and stands against the Taliban and poppy cultivation. Niyaz and other animated speakers also railed against corrupt and inefficient government, and called for development assistance to shore up Taliban resistance and provide hope to the people. &We promise we will help you (GIROA and its Coalition partners) fight Taliban,8 Niyaz asserted, &but you must help us.8 Malik Suhail Khan (protect) added: &We need government,

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economy, and security.8 Civil services are dysfunctional, district sub-governors exploit their connections for personal aggrandizement, and local materials are not used for contracted projects, the Malik stated; the Shinwari remain committed to the government, but it must be effective. Suhail Khan stressed that reintegration at the sub-national level would depend on &political (emphasis) reconciliation8 at the national level.

¶5. (C/REL USA/NATO) Malik Satar (protect) reminded shura participants of the fundamental importance of education, saying there are no government-funded schools in his district) instead the children &are brainwashed in Pakistani schools.8 Moderate Taliban should be reintegrated, Sartar said, and government corruption addressed: &Dirty water flows from the source. Karzai,s Cabinet has new ministers . . . and my water is still dirty.8

COMMENT

¶6. (C/REL USA/NATO) This anti-Taliban tribal pact is a potential, perhaps enduring, breakthrough in breaching corrosive Taliban influence in an RC-East priority area. Task Force Mountain Warrior will respond to the requests of the community tribes for additional development assistance and possibly increased local ABP recruitment. Momentum is needed to seal the defense pact and ensure the Shinwari see tangible and transparent assistance. Support for anti-corruption initiatives, especially those identified by the community, will be important to reconnect communities and a perceptually legitimate GIROA. Finally, we believe it prudent to facilitate cross-border dialogue between the Shinwari and Pakistan,s Afridi tribe to provide depth to Shinwari defenses and expand the appeal for Taliban reintegration. End Comment.

SHINWARI DEFENSE AND ANTI-CORRUPTION COVENANT

¶7. (U) A January 21, 2010 translation of the Shinwari Defense and Anti-Corruption Covenant follows (Note: The Shinwari use

a word translated as &reconciliation8 to refer what is more properly understood as the &reintegration8 process of low-level Taliban fighters, as defined by ISAF and the Embassy. End note.)

BEGIN TEXT: The shura proclaims that the Shinwari Tribe stands unified against all insurgent groups, specifically the Taliban, as well as all corruption and illegal activities that threaten the Afghan people and GIROA. The shura proclaims the Shinwari Tribe will not provide shelter or support of any kind for members of the Taliban. If members of the tribe are found to have sheltered the Taliban, they will have to pay one million Afghanis (USD 20,000) USD 23,000). The shura authorizes the burning of residences of those found harboring Taliban. The shura authorizes the expulsion of those found harboring Taliban. The shura agrees that no poppy will be cultivated or refined in Shinwari tribal areas. Those found guilty will be subject to the same punishment as those harboring Taliban. The shura directs every family in the Shinwari tribal areas to provide one fighting-age male to defend the tribe in case Taliban attacks occur. If the situation in the Shinwari tribal areas deteriorates as a result of Taliban activity, all fighting-age males are to defend the tribal lands from Taliban attacks. Although the shura leadership recognizes that the Afghan government supports their cause, defense preparations have to take place in case the situation changes. For tribal members who have relatives in the TB, the shura offers its own version of reconciliation (sic). If TB members are to go through the tribal reconciliation (sic) process, the tribe will inform GIROA that they have reconciled (sic) and the tribe will coordinate with GIROA for final reconciliation (sic). The shura elected a group of tribal leaders entrusted to speak with the Taliban and inform them of this pact. The shura directs locals to inform a member of the shura if an outsider or suspicious individual is identified in their areas. If the tribal member is not able to reach a member of the shura, the shura authorizes the individual to detain the suspicious person until a shura member arrives to take custody of the individual.

END TEXT

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